

Waiting for School Support: What Parents Can Do for Their Child in the Meantime

After a parent contacts the school, the next step may not happen immediately. A teacher may need time to observe, a conference may need to be scheduled, a support team may need to meet, or an evaluation process may already be underway. Waiting should not mean doing nothing. First, write down exactly what is pending, who is responsible for the next step, the date of the request, and when you agreed to follow up. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends asking for specific examples and deciding how and when progress will be reviewed when families and schools address a concern.¹ While the process moves forward, protect the child's current school functioning. Keep attendance, morning routines, homework structure, sleep, and any existing supports as steady as practical. Record only meaningful new changes: a missed assignment pattern, repeated school refusal, a new classroom concern, or a clear improvement. Send concise updates when they add useful information instead of restarting the entire history in every message. The U.S. Department of Education emphasizes family-school partnership for student success.² Know what kind of process you are waiting for. A teacher response, school support meeting, and formal special education evaluation are not the same thing. If a formal IDEA initial evaluation has begun, federal law generally requires completion within 60 days after parental consent unless the state establishes its own timeframe or an exception applies. Check your state and district procedures rather than assuming every school request follows that timeline. If the child's health, safety, or functioning worsens significantly, contact the appropriate school or health professional rather than simply waiting for the next scheduled date.³

Did You Know?

- ✓ The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends agreeing on how and when a school concern will be followed up and how progress will be judged.¹
- ✓ The U.S. Department of Education identifies family-school partnership as an important support for student success.²
- ✓ Under IDEA, an initial special education evaluation generally has a federal 60-day timeline after parental consent unless a state timeframe or an exception applies.³

Research Sources

- [1. American Academy of Pediatrics. "Dealing with Problems at School: How to Talk With Your Child's Teacher." HealthyChildren.org. Updated July 19, 2023.](#)
- [2. U.S. Department of Education. "Family Partnership and Engagement." Reviewed February 26, 2026.](#)
- [3. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Section 1414\(a\), Initial Evaluations.](#)

Ten-Minute Interim School Support Plan

Use this page to organize what your child needs while a school response or decision is pending. The goal is to stay steady and follow up clearly.

Child's name: _____

Date: _____

Pending school step: _____

School contact: _____

1. Define What Is Pending - About 2 Minutes

Write the exact response, meeting, observation, or decision you are waiting for.

Pending item: _____

Request date: _____

2. Protect Current Functioning - About 2 Minutes

Choose the school-day routines and existing supports that should remain steady.

Keep steady: _____

3. Record Meaningful Changes - About 2 Minutes

Note only changes that affect attendance, work completion, behavior, or learning.

New information: _____

4. Prepare One Follow-Up - About 2 Minutes

Write one concise update or question for the person responsible for the next step.

My message: _____

My question: _____

5. Set the Review Point - About 2 Minutes

Record the date you will check the status or report a meaningful change.

Follow-up date: _____